

Application/Control Number: 10/003,093
Art Unit: 2655

Docket No.: 2000-0600C

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of customizing a multi-media message created by a sender for a recipient, the multi-media message having an animated entity audibly presenting speech converted from text created by the sender, the method comprising:
 - receiving at least one image from the sender;
 - associating each of the at least one image with a tag;
 - presenting the sender with options to insert the tag associated with one of the at least one image into the sender text; and
 - after the sender inserts the tag associated with the one of the at least one ~~images~~ image into the sender text, delivering the multi-media message with the one of the at least one image presented as background to the animated entity according to a position of the tag associated with the one of the at least one image in the sender text, wherein
 - delivering the multi-media message further comprises presenting the one of the at least one image as background when a word prior to the position of the tag associated with the one of the at least one image is presented by the animated entity.
2. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~ef~~ claim 1, wherein delivering the multi-media message further comprises presenting the one of the at least one image as background when a word a predetermined number of word positions prior to the position of the tag associated with the one of the at least one image is presented by the animated entity.
3. (Original) The method of customizing a multi-media message created by a sender for a recipient of claim 1, wherein the at least one image is a static image.

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4. (Original) The method of customizing a multi-media message created by a sender for a recipient of claim 1, wherein the at least one image is a video.

5-6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) A method of customizing a multi-media message created by a sender for a recipient, the multi-media message having an animated entity audibly presenting speech converted from text created by the sender, the method using stored predefined images having associated image tags and stored sender-created images having associated sender-created tags, the method comprising:

presenting the sender with options to insert image tags and sender-created tags into the sender text; and

after the sender inserts the image ~~tag~~ tags or sender-created tags, delivering the multi-media message with the predefined images or sender-created images associated with the inserted image tags and/or sender-created tags presented as background to the animated entity according to a position of the respective tag within the sender text, wherein

the predefined images or sender-created images are displayed as background to the animated entity as soon as a predetermined number of words prior to the position of the respective tag within the sender text begins to be delivered.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of customizing a multi-media message created by a sender for a recipient of claim 7, wherein the predefined images or sender-created images are no longer displayed as background to the animated entity as soon as a predetermined number of words after the position of the respective tag within the sender text begins to be delivered.

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9. (Original) The method of customizing a multi-media message created by a sender for a recipient of claim 7, wherein the predefined images are either static images or video images.

10. (Original) The method of customizing a multi-media message created by a sender for a recipient of claim 9, wherein the sender-created images are either static images or video images.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) The method of customizing a multi-media message created by a sender for a recipient of claim ~~[[11]]~~ 13, wherein the stored image is a static or a video image.

13. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~ A method of customizing a multi-media message created by a sender for a recipient ~~of claim 12~~, further the multi-media message having an animated entity audibly presenting speech converted from text created by the sender, the method using a stored image having an associated visible image tag, the method comprising:

presenting the sender with an option to insert the visible image tag into the sender text, such that when the visible image tag is inserted, the visible image tag, the sender text, and a position of the visible image tag with respect to the sender text is displayed;

presenting the sender with an option to position the animated entity in any location on a display screen using an animated entity position tag;

after the sender inserts the visible image tag and the animated entity position tag, delivering the multi-media message with the image associated with the inserted visible image

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tag presented as background to the animated entity according to a position of the respective tag within the sender text and wherein the position of the animated entity during the delivery of the multi-media message is associated with the animated entity position tag;

presenting the sender with an option to remove the animated entity from the display screen using an animated entity remove tag; and

if the sender inserts the animated entity remove tag, delivering the multi-media message with the image associated with the inserted image tag presented as background while removing the animated entity according to a position of the animated entity remove tag within the sender text.

14-15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently Amended) A method of sending a multi-media message from a sender to a recipient, the multi-media message including an animated entity for delivering a message having text, the method comprising:

providing the sender with a group of customizable multi-media message templates, each template of the groups of templates including predefined parameters comprising a predefined text message, a predefined animated entity, a predefined background, predefined background music, and a predefined set of emoticons within the text of the message; and

if the sender chooses a customizable multi-media message template, presenting the sender with options to change any of the predefined parameters; and

presenting the sender with an option to modify a camera position using camera control tags within the text, the option to modify the camera position including one of move up, move down, move left, or move right.

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17. (Original) The method of sending a multi-media message from a sender to a recipient of claim 16, wherein once the sender customizes the multi-media message template, if at all, the method further comprises delivering the multi-media message to the recipient.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 16, wherein presenting the sender with options to change any of the predefined parameters further comprises presenting the sender with an option to add [[the]] a name of the recipient to the multi-media message.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein presenting the sender with options to change any of the predefined parameters further comprises presenting the sender with an option to choose from a list of predefined and/or sender-added options for each of the template parameters for customizing the multi-media message.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein presenting the sender with options to change any of the predefined parameters further comprises presenting the sender with an option to choose at least one position from which the animated entity will deliver the message.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of sending a multi-media message from a sender to a recipient of claim 20, wherein presenting the user with an option to choose at least one position from which the animated entity will deliver the message further comprises presenting the sender with an option to control animated entity entrance and departure features.

22. (Currently Amended) The method of sending a multi-media message from a sender to a recipient of claim 17, wherein delivering the multi-media message further comprises

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presenting the background when a word prior to a position of a tag associated with an image of the background is presented by the animated entity.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, further comprising:
providing the sender with an option to choose an animated entity from a group of animated entities.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, further comprising:
presenting the sender with an option to add an accessory comprising one of glasses, ear rings, a hat, a shirt, hair color, hair style, or facial hair to the animated entity.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24, wherein presenting the sender with an option to add an accessory to the animated entity further comprises presenting the sender with a list of accessories, the list of accessories including accessories provided by a multi-media message service provider and accessories added by the sender.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24, wherein upon the sender choosing the option to add an accessory, presenting the sender with a preview of the animated entity with the added accessory.

27-28. (Canceled)

29. (Currently Amended) The A method of claim 27 sending a multi-media message from a sender to a recipient, the multi-media message including an animated entity for delivering a message having text, the method comprising:

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providing the sender with options to choose an animated entity from a group of animated entities;
providing the sender with options to insert emoticons in the text of the message;
providing the sender with options to modify an amplitude of emoticons inserted in the text of the message; and
once the sender chooses emoticons to add to the animated entity, if any,
delivering the multi-media message to the recipient, wherein
if the sender modifies the amplitude of emoticons inserted in the text, changing the appearance of the modified emoticons comprises changing a color associated with the modified emoticon emoticons.

30. (Currently Amended) The method of sending a multi-media message of claim [[27]] 29, wherein the ~~appearance~~ respective color of the modified emoticons relates to an intensity of the respective modified amplitude.